The Nation

FOUNDED 1865

Vol. CXXXV NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 1932 No. 3500

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Subscription Rates: Five dollars per annum postpaid in the United States; to Canada, $6.50; and to other foreign countries, $6.00.

THE NATION, No. 20 Vesey Street, New York City. Cable Address: Nation, New York. British Agent for Subscriptions and Advertising, Miss Gertrude M. Cross, 23 Brunswick Square, London W. C. 1, England.

THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE has adjourned for six months. How little progress! What a faint response to the desires of the great masses of the nations of the earth! It is no wonder that Mussolini had read to the conference a message announcing that Italy would refuse to vote on the resolution setting forth the agreements arrived at, on the ground that voting it was a "vain effort," "entirely inadequate when compared to the wishes and hopes of the world." "It is not enough," the message read, "to lay down principles," when "no marked progress is made toward effective disarmament." To this the other nations have an effective retort if the charge made by Hector C. Bywater, in the London *Telegraph,* is true—that Italy is secretly building two cruisers of 6,742 tons, two 615-ton destroyers, and ten small craft, including a new type of submarine. Although seven other nations dissented, and Russia and Germany refused to vote, the resolution was none the less carried by a vote of forty-one to two. The adjournment, so the reports read, took place in an "atmosphere of good humor," accompanied by the feeling that the conference has really accomplished a good deal. The basis for this we shall treat at length in our next issue. Meanwhile it suffices to add that the new German nationalist government has served notice that, unless that nation's armament equality is recognized before the conference reassembles, Germany will not take further part in the proceedings. This brought forth a proper rebuke from the Soviet representative, M. Litvinoff, who rightly declared that the only equality to be sought was equality of disarmament and not that of armament.

"AT THE CONFERENCE I would exclude all experts. . . . They would sterilize the humanitarian impulses of angels." These sound words we take from Senator Borah's latest speech, in which he properly praised the achievements of the Lausanne Conference and favored a new international conference "to deal with any economic and financial question which would have any legitimate bearing upon the economic recovery of the world," with full and complete American participation. As *The Nation* has been urging this for months past, we naturally rejoice to have the Senator advocating it at last. But Mr. Borah, true to his Republican tradition, feels that the sacred tariff must not be touched by this conference, though it has the most vital bearing on the economic recovery of the world; he feels that it should be treated separately by the respective governments after everything else is disposed of—a nice way of putting the cart directly before the horse. But we are disposed to forgive the chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations for this because he is bold enough to raise anew the question of further cuts or cancelation of the debts owed to us, on the ground that if it would pay us to do so we should at least carefully study the matter anew. He himself, of course, believes that further debt readjustments would open foreign markets to us, raise our price levels, decrease unemployment, and thaw out the frozen credits of the banks. This is delightful sanity after all the nonsense talked in Congress lately. We are also deeply grateful to the Senator for this solemn warning:

> The stakes are tremendous. Delay is hazardous. . . . If the upward trend does not start before the cold winds of December, conditions will be nothing less than appalling.

WHEN PRESIDENT HOOVER on July 18 signed the St. Lawrence waterway agreement with Canada, he launched not only a project of tremendous economic import to a large part of the country, but he threw into the political arena a veritable bombshell—or perhaps we should say a boomerang. The dilatory negotiations have resulted in a treaty which vitally affects New York State and at least eighteen States of the Middle West. For, after the expenditure of approximately $800,000,000, if the work already done is included, to make a passage for deep-sea vessels all the way into the Great Lakes, several cities which have hitherto been only inland shipping points will virtually become ocean ports. Naturally, New York is anxious to know whether it loses or gains. But for the lake cities affected, and the region around them, the waterway ought to be a definite asset. There is involved, however, a question not only of commerce but of water power. Governor Roosevelt has been quick to see the importance of the choice between State-produced current and private exploitation, though he has been no more nimble than usual in explaining how, without public distribution, low rates can be guaranteed to the consumer. President Hoover has now promptly claimed all the credit for himself. The treaty will certainly be an issue in the next session of the Senate if not in the campaign. Most illuminating with respect to the political sincerity of

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the Republican and Democratic vote-wooers has been the frantic scurrying of both national committees to rush into the platforms a belated waterway plank, *after* the adoption of these platforms by the conventions.

THE OTTAWA CONFERENCE has opened with a disheartening demand by Australia, Canada, and New Zealand that Great Britain at once put an embargo on Soviet lumber and wheat. The members of the conference generally believe that England will grant this. Why not, when the government is now so completely dominated by the Conservatives who, under the leadership of the same Stanley Baldwin now heading the empire delegation at Ottawa, broke off relations with Russia in May, 1927. It is now plainly to be a long drawn out question of bargaining. London, it appears, is not satisfied with the terms offered by Canada, and desires larger markets for textiles, electrical goods, and machinery for the lighter industries. Australia also demands that the mother country exclude all competitive imports from Denmark and the Argentine. Failing this, Australia "may exclude from the benefits of preference the whole of Great Britain's great staple industries"—which is mother love with a vengeance. South Africa, too, has stated its terms. Primarily, it opposes any reduction of tariffs. Indeed, the whole trend of the debate is to put on new or higher tariffs and to lower none, and thus to rivet securely upon Great Britain her newly founded protective system.

THE SUSPENSION of the Chicago Board of Trade, the principal grain-marketing agency in the United States, by a federal commission composed of the Secretaries of Commerce and Agriculture and the Attorney General is sensational enough to please the most captious. To us it seems as if the three Cabinet members had used a shotgun when they should have used a rifle, if it was necessary to discipline the officials of the Board of Trade for improper practices. As it stands, this action will tend to punish the whole country rather than the individuals responsible for the wrongdoing. The effects will be much more serious than the judges would seem to appreciate, unless we are to interpret the commission's notice that it will entertain an application for mitigation of the penalty imposed after proper hearing and proof that the Board of Trade has mended its ways as a strong hint that the penalty will not be imposed at the end of the fifteen days grace awarded. What makes the situation the more uncomfortable is the fact that there has been, from the beginning of the Farm Board, antagonism on the part of the Board of Trade against the former and its policy. Moreover, the Chicago Board of Trade is the chief market in futures the importance of which has not been diminished by the present credit stringency.

THE PUBLIC WILL FIND it difficult to understand the involved questions relating to the approval by the Interstate Commerce Commission of the concentration of four Eastern rail systems around the Pennsylvania, the New York Central, the Baltimore and Ohio, and the Van Sweringen railroads. As Commissioner Eastman remarks, the public is at present only interested in keeping the wolf from coming through the door. He himself, in his dissenting opinion, is very severe upon the new plan. Congress, he points out, asked the commission to prepare a plan, and then he adds that "events suggest that it would have been simpler to have asked a few of the larger railroads to agree upon a plan for the distribution of the lesser railroads among them." The majority of the commission urges the scheme because it is "practical." Mr. Eastman points out that it has largely been put into effect without waiting for the commission's decision, often illegally and, in the case of the Pennsylvania, arrogantly, without regard for the commission, the law, or public opinion. He also condemns it as an Eastern scheme, when it should have been part of a united plan for the entire country. Meanwhile, one smiles as one remembers the Clayton Act, the Northern Securities case, and the repeated efforts, decade after decade, to prevent railroads from coming together to limit or do away with competition.

LONG UNDER ATTACK by its enemies, the power trust now appears to be losing its friends. The latest blow comes from the Federal Power Commission. Desiring to adopt a more stable policy in issuing licenses for water-power projects, the commission set out a year ago to study the many questions raised in this connection by the Federal Power Act. It had no intention of investigating the financial relationships of the utility companies, for that was "beyond the scope of this inquiry." But it found holding companies playing such a large part in the power industry and the financial arrangements within the industry so involved that it had perforce to look into these relationships in order to get the information it was seeking. In a preliminary report just issued the commission said that it had found ten "top companies" in the industry controlling ninety-one subsidiaries operating in 12,487 communities, these communities having a total population exceeding 42,000,000. The "top companies" were connected by interlocking directorates and by other means. So amazed were the commissioners by these and similar discoveries that in their report they recommended "public control" over holding companies, supervision of all contracts between holding and operating companies, and other measures "providing specifically for the filing of financial and other reports on prescribed forms for full publicity."

AN ESPECIALLY ATROCIOUS "third degree" murder by policemen in Nassau County, Long Island, has aroused public opinion to a high pitch in New York City. Already five policemen have been indicted for first-degree manslaughter, and eight for second-degree assault. The victim was Hyman Stark, who was charged with robbing and assaulting the mother of a detective. He and his two associates were horribly maltreated, policeman after policeman pounding them without the slightest regard for their shrieks of mercy. Finally one man who weighed over 250 pounds "rocked" on the body of Stark with one foot on the throat of the victim and one on his body with the result that the victim died soon after being taken to a hospital. Fortunately, there were honest and upright prosecuting officers, and a justice, Steinbrink, who rightly declared that this sort of criminality "reduces law-enforcement agencies to the same low level as the criminal element." Precisely, but that did not prevent a committee of the New York County Criminal Courts Bar Association from taking this opportunity to bring in a report declaring that "instances of such abuses are few" in New York and adding the usual remark

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that it would be dangerous to limit police activities for "they must not be hampered" in dealing with criminals. Year after year *The Nation* has appealed to the bar associations in New York to do something to stop this horrible evil, but in vain; the Bar will not clear itself of its share of the guilt. This latest action is the more discreditable to the profession because in the Wickersham report it was stated that "the third degree is widely and brutally employed in New York City."

A GREAT AND INSPIRED TEACHER, a scientist of international renown, a diligent, enthusiastic searcher after the truth—this was Dr. Graham Lusk, for twenty-three years professor of physiology in Cornell Medical College, who has just died at the age of sixty-six. Here was an American who really was a world authority in his field of nutrition; whose scholarship was recognized as notably in Vienna, Berlin, Munich, London, Glasgow, and Edinburgh as in his own country; whose presence on an international commission made that body at once distinguished and forceful. But no one who knew him in such a capacity could possibly measure his influence upon his students. He had not only much knowledge to bestow, he had the rare gift of personality and a charm which were never to be forgotten by those who came into contact with him. To these he added, to the very end of his life, an unquenchable enthusiasm, an absolute mental integrity, and a devotion to his work surpassed only by the unselfishness and—in the manliest sense—sweetness of his nature. These may seem extravagant words. They are true and just. We give place to them all the more gladly, in this hour of the complete moral and intellectual bankruptcy of our political leaders and our captains of industry, so that our readers may not forget that there are still great men and noble men among us, and still some teachers at whose feet it is a priceless privilege to sit.

ACCORDING TO A DISPATCH duly printed in the daily press this great country of ours is about to be rescued from its present desperate plight by the benevolent activities of an insect. We are not, dear reader, being flippant about our President or any of his aids, for we allude quite literally to a certain hexapod, commonly known as the boll weevil, which is reported to be destroying in a highly gratifying fashion the cotton now growing in Southern fields and thus satisfactorily supplying the lack of that drouth or other natural calamity for which all economists are so devoutly praying. We hope, of course, that he will do his work as thoroughly as need be, but it is evident nevertheless that our national government has again been detected in gross incompetence. Why has it spent thousands upon thousands of dollars in destroying this benevolent insect, and in destroying it so effectively that the poor farmer has to depend upon mere chance to provide it for him when necessity arises? In the future, we hope that no boll weevils will be killed. Let them be confined, segregated, and fed at the public expense. Then the next time we are threatened with ruin because we have too much of everything, the remedy will be in our hands, so far, at least, as this particular commodity, cotton, is concerned. Washington will simply have to release boll weevils in correctly controlled numbers and Dixie will be happy again.

A Great Ambassador

IN one of his speeches after the United States entered the war Ambassador Jusserand quoted approvingly a saying of Marcus Aurelius which read, in part: "Never value anything as profitable to thyself which shall compel thee . . . *to hate any man.* . . ." It was a sentiment which his government and that of the United States should have made their own during the war. They refused, but the Ambassador lived up to it. From the beginning to the end of that struggle M. Jusserand never made a provocative or an imperialistic or a bitter, hate-creating speech. What higher praise could be given to him, save to add that, as we pointed out when he retired, he never struck a single false note and never undertook to tell the United States how to run its own affairs in all the crowded years in which he served the French Republic in Washington? To this wisdom and self-restraint, he added in his person, modesty, a simple bearing, and the charm of the witty scholar.

It was not merely to his own fine qualities and his tact that he owed his success, but to his complete understanding of the Americans, in which he was surpassed only by Lord Bryce, and to his mastery of English—to that his numerous contributions to *The Nation* prior to its present editorship testify eloquently. His whole conduct of his difficult office in the war years shone by contrast with the egregious blundering of the German Embassy which first evidenced the usual German failure to understand the psychology of other peoples, then struck one wrong note after the other, and finally became the headquarters of a group of miscreants whose leader, Heaven save the mark, is now Chancellor of Germany and dictator of Prussia. Jusserand was always the gentleman, the sorrowing patriot, who placed dignity and discretion above all else and therefore nobly served his country. It was not his fault that his country's policies became what they were, and certainly it was no responsibility of his that the high tide of American admiration and friendship—never wholly justified by the facts—has ebbed so quickly.

That the recession pained him to the quick admits of no doubt; his last public utterance to be printed in this country proves that. But he was philosopher enough to understand and be patient. It is to be hoped that he was not too ill to know of the new and finer French attitude at Lausanne, the statesmanlike recession from impossible and hate-creating reparations demands. His satisfaction over that could not in the least bit have been diminished by the fact that the Prime Minister to initiate this wise course was the same Herriot who, in 1924, retired M. Jusserand.

Was his success in considerable part due to his being a man of letters? We have often wondered. Certainly Bryce and some of our own literary diplomats, such as John Lothrop Motley, James Russell Lowell, and John Hay, played their parts well when called upon to represent their countries abroad. But the question arises whether that was not rather due more to the largeness of the men themselves, and their freedom from political ambition, than to their polish, their literary skill, or the deep draughts they had drunk at the fountain of letters. At least that country is fortunate, indeed, which produces a Jusserand to speak for it in its hour of need.

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Is It to Be Murder, Mr. Hoover?

IS it to be mass murder, Herbert Hoover? Murder by starvation, murder by disease, murder by killing all hope—and the soul? We ask, Mr. President, because this terrible fate is now staring multitudes in the face in the sight of plenty and because the responsibility now rests entirely upon you. Congress has adjourned after voting only $300,000,000 for direct relief—and that only for the States. No one can call it together again for five months except you. Day by day more cities approach the line of bankruptcy; day by day the plight of the individual States of the Union gets worse. In community after community the authorities and the leading citizens can see no hope whatever of heading off the starvation of innocents. And that is murder, Mr. President, cold-blooded and utterly unnecessary murder, far worse than if the victims were to be stood up against a wall and shot down by firing squads. Every death by starvation today—and there are men, women, and children perishing daily because of plain lack of food and undernourishment—must be charged up against the government of the United States, and in the last analysis against *you*. That is not merely because you are President, but because you as an individual have from the first set your face against direct federal relief to those who through no fault of their own are without work and food. You are deeply and sincerely convinced that if necessary it is better that some should starve than that multitudes should have their characters wrecked, and their initiative killed by a dole.

But Mr. President, are you living in the United States? Do you know what is happening? Do you know that it is no longer the starvation of a few which is at hand? We ask these questions because your statement to the press on July 17 indicates that you are living entirely detached from the actual situation, that you do not know what is happening under the flag of which you are the chief guardian. You stated on that day that you would sign the so-called relief bill granting $300,000,000 for temporary loans by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation "to such States as are absolutely unable to finance the relief of distress." You then went on to say that, through this provision, "We have a solid back log of assurance that there need be no hunger and cold in the United States." You added that these loans were to be based only upon "absolute need and evidence of financial exhaustion," and concluded with the statement: "I do not expect any State to resort to it except as a last extremity." Even before you had signed the bill, no less than thirty States, in the face of your language, announced their intention to apply for this money in testimony to their absolute need, financial exhaustion, and their being at the last extremity. Some of the largest States in the Union were among those on the list, and they will ask for all they can get. Only eighteen of the forty-eight States were still to be heard from when you made the bill a law, and some of these are going to apply just as soon as they know exactly what the law contains. Is it any wonder that we ask you if you know what is happening in the United States today?

Again, we ask you this question because your assurance in saying that these $300,000,000, to be loaned to the States for "direct" assistance to the unemployed, will save the *cities* leads us to believe that you do not read a single daily newspaper, and that your entourage is concealing the facts from you. Have you not heard that city authorities in St. Louis and the charitable agencies have just turned adrift 13,000 families which they can no longer support, while the city of Detroit has dropped 18,000 who now have nowhere to turn, no assurance that even a single crust of bread will be forthcoming for their support? Have you not learned that the city of Bridgeport, and other cities and towns in Connecticut have let it be known that if the State does not come to their aid at once they have no hope whatever of caring further for their unemployed, their own resources being entirely exhausted? Did you read that eight hundred men marched into the Indiana State Capitol last week demanding food, declaring that if they were not given help they would return 300,000 strong? Have you learned that the police in St. Louis have already fired on a mob demanding bread? Have you not read of the town of Clinton, Mass., where on July 7 "more than three hundred men, women, and crying children crowded the corridors of the Town Hall appealing for food"—only to learn that the town treasury has been exhausted, that it is unable to borrow a cent from any bank, and that it has been, and still is, trying to support one out of every six residents of the town who are destitute? These are not exceptional cases; they can be multiplied a hundredfold and from almost every section of the country. Is it any wonder, Mr. President, that thirty States moved at once? And how long do you think the $300,000,000 is going to last in the face of this? Do you not yourself read, Mr. President, of the horrible cases of self-destruction of parents who can no longer feed their children? Did you not read of the man in New York who jumped from a bridge because he could not stand the agony of coming home to seven starving children for whom he could not get one cent of relief from city or charity? Has no one told you of Anthony Prasol of Northampton, Mass., father of eight children who killed himself because he had no hope of work or aid, or of the children of the Sandoval family of Oakland, Cal., who died of poisoning because they sought to live on decayed food picked up in the streets? Again, these are not exceptional cases; they can be duplicated every hour of the day all over the land.

The eight hundred Indianians who marched on their legislature declared that they were facing "mass starvation or suicide." That is what the whole country is facing, Mr. President. You have boasted of the absence of bloodshed and rioting in this depression. Beware! Be guided by the signs of the approaching despair of multitudes. We know that the regular troops are ready, and that the National Guard has been specially coached in riot drill. But their guns are no remedy, Mr. President. They will merely add to the horror of the situation. What is to come? Must Americans perish miserably because of your fear that their characters may be sullied by a dole? Is it to be mass murder, Mr. President? The answer rests with you and you alone.

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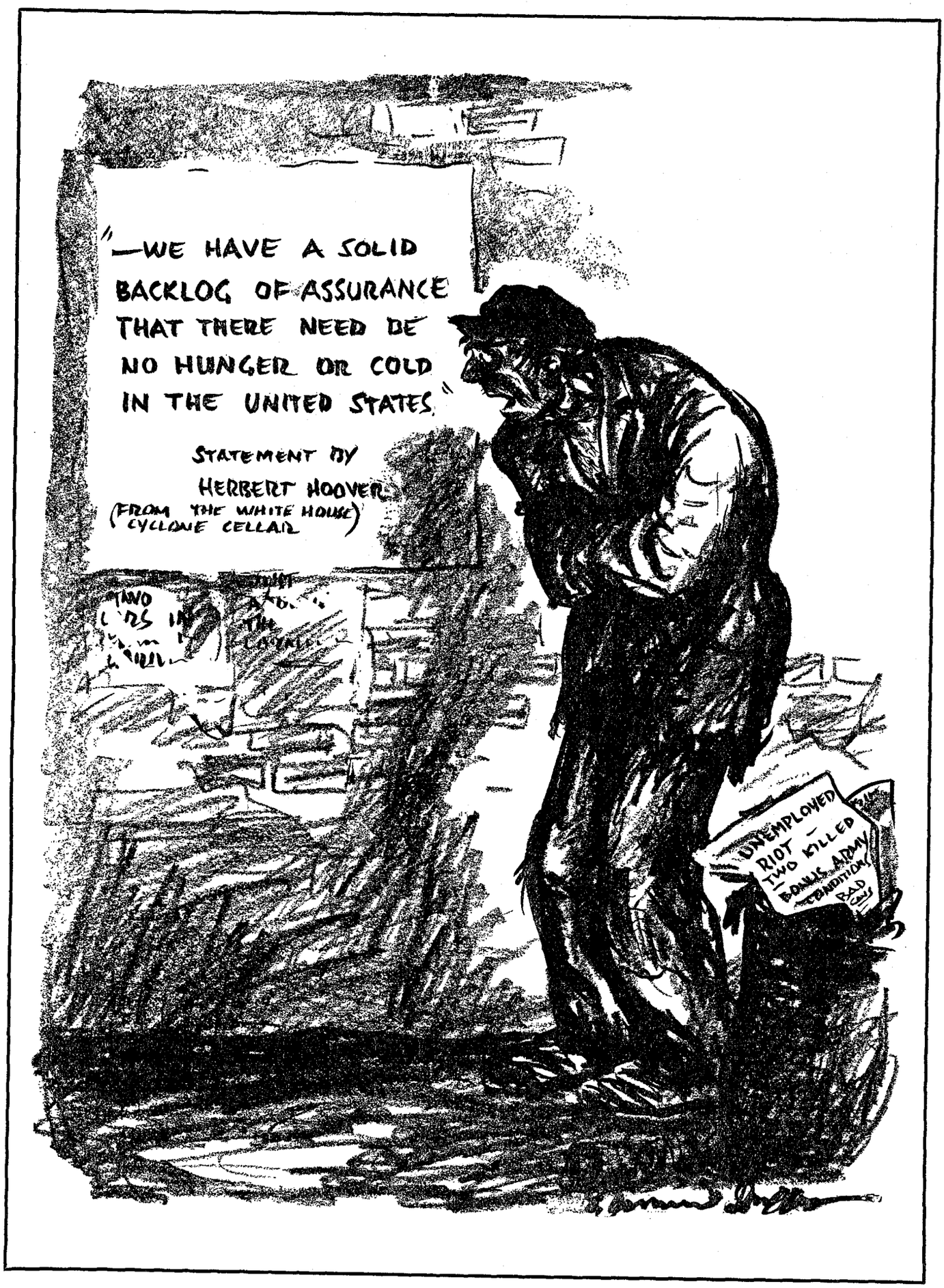
"—WE HAVE A SOLID BACKLOG OF ASSURANCE THAT THERE NEED BE NO HUNGER OR COLD IN THE UNITED STATES."
STATEMENT BY HERBERT HOOVER (FROM THE WHITE HOUSE CYCLONE CELLAR)
UNEMPLOYED RIOT — TWO KILLED BONUS ARMY CONDITIONS BAD

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The Militarists Take Prussia

CHANCELLOR von Papen did not hesitate long in seizing power in Prussia. Whether he did so with the connivance of Adolf Hitler and the fascists matters little. The republicans of Germany are now confronted with an accomplished fact. The Republic itself survives—but only on paper. More than two-thirds of its people and territory are now under a military dictatorship. The shell of the Weimar Constitution remains, of course, but apparently only to serve the purposes of the militarists. They are emphatically declaring that they acted wholly in accordance with the rules laid down in that document. But precisely the same position was taken by Luttwitz, Ehrhardt, and the other reactionary leaders during the Kapp *Putsch* in March, 1920. They captured the central government by a surprise march on Berlin, established what they called a "Government of Labor," and then sought to justify their coup d'etat by declaring that they were merely seeking "to restore the essence and spirit of the Weimar Constitution, which had been shamefully mishandled by the legitimate government." Now the very same groups have seized power, using the very same excuses; but this time the militarists, junkers, industrialists, and other extreme nationalists appear likely to succeed. But it would be the success of machine-gun rule, not of honest government.

In 1920 the reaction was defeated by the discipline of the organized workers. The Berlin Government had been forewarned, but sought to ignore the warnings. It was not prepared to offer resistance when the reactionary troops came through the Brandenburger Tor and marched up Wilhelmstrasse to take over the government offices. The Cabinet fled to Dresden. But the working class was ready to fight and die for the Republic, which was then less than two years old. The leaders of the trades unions and Social Democratic Party promptly published a manifesto calling upon their members to strike. "Everything is at stake," the appeal read. "No business must be run so long as Ludendorff's military dictatorship prevails. Therefore cease work. Strike! Cut off the resources of this reactionary clique. Fight with all means for the maintenance of the Republic. Let there be a general strike all along the line. Proletarians, unite! Down with the counter-revolution!" So successful was the general strike that the industry and business of the entire country was tied up within a few hours, and five days later the militarists and nationalists admitted defeat.

That was twelve years ago. Despite the hardships of the war, the German labor movement, for years the best-disciplined and best-organized in Europe, remained the only stable force in the country. Since then the strength of the labor movement has been eaten away by inflation, continued unemployment, the economic disintegration of recent years, and the wavering policies of its own leaders. Today as never before the workers of Germany are beaten, without hope. A working class cannot subsist on starvation rations for years and expect to retain enough strength and spirit to combat an offensive such as that launched against the German workers and lower middle class by Hindenburg, Von Schleicher, and Von Papen. Therefore, if we except the editorial outcry of the *Rote Fahne,* the Communist organ, there has been no demand whatever for a general strike to crush the latest attempt to set up a military dictatorship. The workers are taking their whipping lying down. For this reason, and for this reason alone, is the dictatorship likely to remain in power for some time to come.

However, there is still real danger that the new regime may precipitate bloodshed, perhaps civil war. We do not yet know what part Hitler has played in the maneuverings of Von Schleicher and Von Papen. If the militarists come to terms with the fascists, these two groups together can probably dominate Germany without fear of serious or important opposition from the Socialists and Communists. In that event we may see a coalition government in which Hitler and his lieutenants would be given some portfolios, but with the actual power remaining in the hands of the Reichswehr generals. Such a government, though resting in the final analysis upon the bayonets of the army, would have the unquestionably valuable support of the increasingly popular fascist movement. On the other hand, if Hitler should win a majority in the Reichstag elections of July 31 and decide thereupon that he wants all or nothing, there may be trouble ahead. It is hardly to be supposed that the militarists would have taken such energetic measures in Prussia had they any idea that they would soon have to yield their newly-gained authority to Hitler.

Having captured Prussia, will the militarists now move against the other German states? And if they do, what will be the result thereof? A dictatorship for the whole of Germany, or a dissolution of the federation created by Bismarck in 1871? It is worth noting that Von Papen is moving with great caution in his relations with the other states. He must be aware of the deep-seated antagonisms that divide Munich, Stuttgart, and Karlsruhe from Berlin. He must know that there is strong sentiment, particularly in Bavaria, for separation from Prussia. He has his hands full in governing the latter state, and more than full in trying to solve the German economic puzzle. It is likely that he will not seek to make his task altogether impossible by proceeding against the other states, especially when he does not know to what lengths they are prepared to go in resisting an extension of the dictatorship to their territories.

But the sight of a military regime in Prussia is terrible enough. Whatever may be the outcome of this dread-inspiring development, is it not fresh proof of the utter folly of believing that good may come out of the crime of war? Even Mr. Wilson, we believe, were he alive, would have to admit that, with the old guard again in charge in Berlin only fourteen years after the armistice, with democracy collapsing everywhere in favor of dictatorship, with armaments greatly grown since 1914 and the League of Nations weak and ineffective, and with our own country deep in economic disaster, it would be impossible today to claim a single solid gain as a result of our determination to enter the World War in order to make over the world by wholesale murder in favor of the Fourteen Points and the establishment of permanent peace.

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Grave Danger in Detroit

By MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

Detroit, July 21

DETROIT'S bankers and business men are more than thankful that Mayor Murphy's police still have the whiphand in this city. Genuine rebellion is smoldering here. It is constantly manifesting itself in numerous ways. Wherever one goes through the working-class districts one hears positive, angry expressions of dissent, unafraid expressions of sympathy for the radicals. It is not that the Communist movement is spreading, for there is no sure evidence that it is, but the sympathies of the workers and the lower middle class, which a year ago were all for law and order, have now swung around to the unemployed and their leaders. When relief for the unemployed is reduced or cut off for a day or two, feeling among the disappointed and hungry applicants rises to fever pitch. There have been minor riots and threats of worse disturbances. Petty thievery is increasing. Windows of small retail shops are smashed at night and relieved of their goods. Children from the poorer districts have taken to snatching bundles from customers coming out of grocery stores. They run off to barren homes with their booty, or eat it themselves in out-of-the-way alleys. More frequently, grown men, usually in twos and threes, enter chain stores, order all the food they can possibly carry, and then walk quietly out without paying. Every newspaper in town knows of this practice and knows that it is spreading, but none mentions it in print. The press excuses itself on the ground that these occurrences are not a matter of public record. And the chain-store managers refuse to report such incidents to the police lest the resultant publicity encourage the practice.

While the city is quiet for the moment, the bankers, industrialists, and municipal authorities are taking no chances. Henry Ford and other automobile makers are building up private police forces recruited in large measure from the underworld. When for the sake of municipal economy city policemen have to be laid off, the best of them are immediately hired by the automobile companies. It would never do to have trained men who can shoot straight join the ranks of the unemployed. Police Commissioner Watkins has shown that he also means business. He has flooded the city, especially the factory districts, with police spies. At the Briggs plant a few weeks ago he gave the workers a foretaste of the sort of treatment they might expect if in their hunger and misery they should ever forget that they are loyal, well-behaved Americans. The workers' demonstration on Mack Avenue was put down with a show of brutality virtually unprecedented in this depression. Permission to hold the meeting, which attracted 10,000 persons, had been granted by a subordinate police official. A committee of six was elected to seek a conference with the managers of the factory. When the committee started to cross the street the factory gates opened and more than a hundred uniformed policemen swarmed out. At the same moment a score of mounted policemen, who had been waiting around the corner, galloped into the crowd, mercilessly swinging their heavy wooden clubs, and not for a moment heeding the outcries of the persons whose heads they cracked or who were trampled down by their horses. Incidentally, along with a number of demonstrators, innocent bystanders, and two newspapermen, scores of whom were severely injured, two police spies in the crowd, unable to make known their identity in time, were beaten up by the mounted police.

More significant are the preparations being made for an anti-radical drive scheduled for autumn if the unemployment situation gets no better. The Chicago *Tribune's* new slogan, "Now Beat the Reds," is much favored here in certain quarters. The Board of Education has already started by refusing to let the Communists use the public schools for their political meetings, although other parties are permitted to use the school halls for similar purposes. Department of Labor agents are helping by their campaign against "undesirable aliens." One hundred were arrested today; four hundred more are listed for deportation. The police, too, have of late been increasingly active. They have been picking up suspected radicals in the streets, beating them up in the police stations, and then turning them loose without bringing charges against them. The real stimulus for the anti-red campaign will probably come from the Union League of Michigan, which has asked for and received an official opinion "outlining constitutional freedom of speech." According to the opinion given by Attorney-General Voorhies, if it is applied, the right of free speech will hereafter be denied to the Communists. He declared that "the advocacy of communism is an abuse of the right of freedom of speech, and is, therefore, not protected by either the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States, or section 4 of Article 2 of the Michigan Constitution."

But the symptoms of rebellion are not confined to the workers. Among the better-paid mechanics, shopkeepers, school teachers, middle-class intellectuals, and municipal employees there are also signs of growing unrest. For one thing, there is bitterness and contempt among these people for Frank Murphy, the liberal Mayor, who is generally accused of having sold out to the bankers. Some of the men and women of these groups with whom I talked are frankly seeking a new leader through whom they can express their profound disgust with existing economic and political conditions; others are joining the Socialist Party, or at least have signified their willingness to support that party. There is a very definite revolt among the taxpayers. Some of the more influential property-owners, many of them real-estate speculators, have forced the city to call a special referendum election for August 9. At that time the voters will decide whether they wish to amend the city charter so as to limit the budget for the current fiscal year to $61,000,000, and to reduce the budget by the sum of $1,000,000 in each of the succeeding years until a final limit of $57,000,000 is reached. Last April the city council approved a budget of $72,600,000 for the current year. The municipal authorities oppose the amendment. The Common Council has already called upon the voters to defeat it, while Corporation Counsel Wilcox said he will appeal to the courts if the amendment wins.

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Detroit, one of the first cities to be seriously affected by the depression, showed signs of restlessness as early as the fall of 1930. In September of that year, largely with the help of a group of liberals and with the votes of the skilled workers, school teachers, and city employees, Mayor Bowles was recalled and Frank Murphy elected in his place. The Murphy administration promptly launched an unemployment relief program which has since been criticized as extravagant and poorly administered. Whatever the justification for this charge, it can hardly be denied that the city has been compelled to cut its relief expenditures literally to a starvation basis. When I was in Detroit in the spring of 1931, more than 45,000 families were receiving welfare aid. This spring, although unemployment had increased, fewer than 25,000 families were being helped. It is asserted that many families who still possessed some small means of private support had been weeded out, and that others were dropped because "they were clearly not entitled to relief." But surely not all the 20,000 or more families who were stricken from the rolls had been obtaining relief under false pretenses. There must have been a few at least, perhaps many, who were in dire want and had nowhere else to turn for help when they were dropped. The Welfare Department's funds, which seemed so plentiful in the winter of 1930-31, were exhausted last November. The Mayor appointed an emergency relief committee to raise $2,250,000 by public subscription. The committee thought it could probably raise $1,250,000, but not more than that. Ultimately it turned only $645,000 over to the Welfare Department. Obviously the number of families receiving help had to be cut down.

But the outlook for the year which began July 1 is infinitely darker. Detroit is rapidly approaching the point where it can no longer help any of its unemployed, where it cannot even pay its employees. The new budget provides only $1,200,000 for welfare aid—winter before last the relief administration was spending twice that much in a single month. Guy A. Durgan, president of the welfare commission, announced a few days ago that 18,000 families would have to be dropped from the relief rolls. Under this arrangement a thousand were to be dropped every day with a week's food allowance, until the number of families being helped reached 6,000. The others would have to look to the county or elsewhere for help. It was planned to dismiss 370 emergency welfare workers and to close seven of the city's thirteen relief stations. In cold print this plan, which Mayor Murphy had approved, looked so alarming that the Mayor felt it necessary to repudiate the arrangement and to declare that the needed money would be found somewhere. Since then, however, another 5,000 families have been dropped from the rolls. More and more people are likely to go hungry this autumn and winter. Can it be held that there is no cause for unrest in Detroit?

Among the mistakes Mayor Murphy made at the beginning of his administration, as I pointed out in *The Nation* of May 13, 1931, was his appointment of James K. Watkins to be police commissioner of the city. It was extremely unwise to place a man of his background and instincts at the head of a police department in an industrial community like Detroit. Frank Murphy is an ardent and doubtless sincere advocate of free speech, but he lacks the courage to restrain his police commissioner, whose activities are destroying what is left of his reputation as a liberal.

Another mistake was his selection of G. Hall Roosevelt to manage the municipal finances. Roosevelt is banker-minded by training and sympathy. He attaches much more importance to the necessity of maintaining the city's credit—so that the city can borrow more money and thus increase its indebtedness to the banks—than he does to the simple needs of the unemployed. When he has to choose between paying the school teachers and the bankers, though he has money on hand to which the former are legally entitled, he uses that money to meet charges against notes and bonds due July 1. The teachers would have to go without, he explained, because he could "not afford to take a chance with the financial integrity of the city. We expect to have money enough to pay both teachers and other employees, as well as meet interest payments, but we haven't got it yet, and it would be taking a chance on default to use $480,000 for salaries." However sound this may be financially, it has not rid the teachers and other city employees of the notion that Roosevelt has been deliberately and consistently playing into the hands of the bankers. The teachers believe, and with some justice, that they have been cheated. In any case the city is today at the mercy of the banks. Frank Murphy is now taking orders not from the voters he represents, but from Ralph Stone, a Detroit banker representing a group of New York financial houses. At Stone's direction the Mayor has reduced relief expenditures and municipal salaries, and has sought to economize in other directions—invariably at the expense of the workers or unemployed. It may very well be that the city in this respect cannot help itself. But many Detroit residents with whom I talked blame Murphy for not having fought hard enough against the dictatorship of the bankers.

That the Mayor feels uncomfortable in his present predicament is evident. Not long ago there was held in his office a secret meeting attended by Stone, Roosevelt, other city officials, and three members of the common council. Murphy presented to this meeting a draft ordinance calling for a one-third reduction in municipal salaries—he had been reelected only a few months before on the promise that he would not cut salaries. Roosevelt indicated that he was the author of the draft ordinance. Stone, replying to a question from the Mayor, said the proposed salary cut met with his wishes. Councilman John Lodge, asked to introduce the ordinance at a special meeting of the council, said he would do so, but added that he would not support the measure. At the council session the next day it was quickly seen that the ordinance would be defeated. Councilman John Smith, former mayor, delivered a long speech bitterly assailing the bankers and denouncing the municipal administration for meekly submitting to orders from Stone. The galleries, packed with municipal employees, most of them former supporters of the Mayor, lustily applauded the speech. Murphy, admittedly a better orator than Smith, arose immediately and lashed the bankers with even more vigor. But his pitiful effort to work both sides of the street fell flat. The galleries stared down upon him in cold silence.

The ordinance was defeated, but the bankers bided their time. Two months ago a group of industrialists and bankers began a secret study of the city's finances. The other day the results of this study were announced in the form of a new financial plan, authorship of which was credited to Mayor Murphy. Yesterday the Common Council

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approved the Murphy plan by establishing a five-day week for municipal employees and cutting salaries 14½ per cent. The budget will be reduced accordingly. In return the industrialists and department-store owners agreed to pay at once the sum of $7,000,000 in taxes normally not due until December. They will draw 6 per cent interest on their money. The bankers agreed to extend short-term notes, amounting to $53,000,000, which are held against the city. The plan will take care of Detroit until January 1. Then the city must borrow again. The industrialists have said they will then lend the city $20,000,000, but they have not yet named their terms.

Unemployment, police terrorism, the dictatorship of the bankers, and Mayor Murphy's weak and vacillating rule have all contributed to the unrest apparent here. Detroit has already witnessed several major manifestations of the growing rebellion. There was first the Ford massacre, followed by a great public funeral for the victims which was attended by thirty to fifty thousand workers. The Ford incident was a signal for a drive against all radicals, but the roundup of the agitators and Communist Party leaders stopped almost as soon as it began. The authorities hesitated to proceed in the face of an aroused public opinion which all too clearly sympathized with the workers who had taken part in the Ford demonstration. However, the plans for an anti-red drive were only suspended until they could be more perfectly drawn. There have been other demonstrations such as that at the Briggs plant. I interviewed a number of persons, shopkeepers, professional people, and others, who had witnessed this affair. Without exception they all spoke well of the workers and denounced the police brutality they had seen. One, a chemist, had even gone to police headquarters to complain, only to be told there that if he did not like the manner in which the police conducted themselves he "ought to join the Reds; you probably belong there anyhow."

The workers and lower middle class would doubtless find other and more striking ways in which to express their reaction to present conditions were it not for the confusion of counsel and division of leadership among the proletarian and bourgeois radicals. There are in Detroit more than a dozen liberal and working-class "movements," all working at cross purposes. They include besides the independent middle-class intellectuals such organizations as the Socialist Party, Socialist Labor Party, Proletarian Party, General Labor Union, Industrial Workers of the World, International Brotherhood Welfare Association, and the Communist Party. The liberals, now clearly disgusted with Murphy, are leaderless. They want to turn to someone else for guidance and direction, but they will not have another man like Frank Murphy. The Socialist Party, though it appears to be making notable gains, is torn here as elsewhere by factionalism, with the non-Marxian faction the stronger numerically. One of the party workers, who because of his position will have to play an important role in the coming Presidential campaign in Michigan, frankly declared in my presence that he considered Norman Thomas a social fascist. Such internal dissension is bound to prevent the Socialists from taking the lead in the working-class movement here. A Socialist leader told me that his party had no criticism to make of the police, a most revealing confession, for it shows that the Socialists are taking no active part in the working-class fight and thus have not had to contend with the opposition of the police department. Most of the new members of the party are middle-class liberals and white-collar workers. "There are," said a member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany who was visiting Detroit, "too many school teachers coming into the party to do it any good." Nevertheless, this middle-class trend toward a mildly radical party is in itself a significant sign of the times. If nothing else, it means votes for Socialist candidates. I met a number of Detroit voters who, notwithstanding that they had never cast their ballots for any but Republican or Democratic candidates and had never talked with or been approached by a Socialist Party worker, have decided to vote for Norman Thomas in November. A few are accepting Thomas as "the least of three evils"; others have become convinced that a new social order is needed and that the necessary reconstruction cannot be achieved through either the Republican or Democratic machine. If there is no turn in the economic situation before November, Norman Thomas will get a surprisingly large vote here, even larger perhaps than he anticipates.

It is the Communist Party which is making the strongest appeal to the workers. However foolish or futile the tactics of this party may appear to some observers—and that they have often been stupid can hardly be denied—it must be conceded that the party has won the sympathy of a large section of Detroit's laboring population. This does not mean that the party membership is expanding at any phenomenal rate, or that the activities of the Communist leaders are creating votes for William Z. Foster. The sympathy I mention is almost entirely passive; it simply reflects an awakening class consciousness. Were the Communists to depend less upon orders from Moscow, were they to forget some of their doctrine and learn more of the American labor problem and American psychology, and were they by some miracle or other to improve the quality of their leadership, they could, in my judgment, very quickly dominate Detroit, politically at least. As it is, their propaganda has made deep inroads among the workers here. In particular the workers have been impressed by the vigor and promptness with which the Communists are disposed to organize and lead demonstrations against wage-cuts, reductions in relief expenditures, and the dictatorship of the bankers.

The municipal employees may hold their indignation meetings and denounce Mayor Murphy as they have been doing. The school teachers may flock to the Socialist Party. The unemployed may growl and grumble as they stand in the relief lines all night long waiting for the grocery orders that do not come. The Communists may damn Henry Ford and the bankers to the applause of hundreds of spectators in Grand Circus Park and to the discomfiture of the scores of uniformed policemen waiting in areaways and cellars nearby to suppress the slightest sign of a disturbance. But these things in themselves do not greatly trouble the bankers, business men, and municipal authorities of Detroit. They feel, said a prominent investment banker, that they can handle the agitators when the time comes, but they are not sure that the workers and lower middle class, subject as they are to the pressure of unemployment as well as to the promptings of radical organizers, will much longer remain quiescent. They are afraid, this man said, that the blind support which the workers in the past have given to the forces of law and order is being undermined.

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Some Sweet-Smelling Politics

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, July 23

THANKS to the indiscretion of a Cabinet member in bestowing his confidences, it is already possible for your correspondent to disclose the outline of the Hoover plan of campaign. Speaking to a small group of individuals whom he supposed to be loyal Hoover men, this dignitary revealed that the Hoover strategy would be developed around three main themes, to wit: (1) A general attack on Speaker Garner as "radical" and "unsound," coupled with the whispered insinuation that Roosevelt's health is bad and that the election of the Democratic ticket probably would mean the elevation of Garner to the Presidency within two years; (2) an attack on Roosevelt't own supposed "radicalism," as evidenced by his attitude on electric power and his allusions to "a new deal" and "the forgotten man"; and (3) an organized secret endeavor to persuade Al Smith's partisans in New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts that Al was the victim of anti-Catholic propaganda disseminated by Roosevelt workers in the South and West prior to the Chicago convention. This sweet-smelling program, so reminiscent of the tactics which were successful in 1928, apparently will be expanded to allow Mr. Hoover to charge the Democrats with conspiring to "bring back the saloon." I am tempted to douse the entire plan with formaldehyde and present it without comment, but it provokes interesting ruminations. For one thing, there is abundant evidence that the impression of Garner's vulnerability is confined mainly to Administration officials and a few conservative Eastern newspaper editors. Reliable observers West and South of the Alleghenies report that the Speaker's recent controversies with the President over relief legislation strengthened him with the voters. It would be not merely surprising, but astonishing to discover that Hoover and Ogden Mills had gauged public sentiment more accurately than John Garner. Incidentally, our readers might like to know that Garner's insistence on full publicity for future loans by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation was fortified at a critical juncture by a message from Roosevelt, who informed his running mate that he considered the issue of publicity versus secrecy in public business a vital one of public policy, and was prepared to make a campaign issue of it if Hoover vetoed the relief bill on that account. Another reason, unstated but just as real, was the fixed belief among Democratic leaders that secrecy concerning R. F. C. loans would greatly simplify the Republican problem of raising a campaign fund. If some readers are prompted to infer from the latter that national politics does not always proceed on the loftiest ethical plane, I hasten to assure them that the inference is thoroughly sound. Politics is almost as rotten as banking.

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IF Washington is not presently the scene of bloody rioting it will be because the unemployed war veterans encamped here exhibit more good sense and composure than the authorities who are attempting to deal with them. And if violence does occur it may be attributed to Herbert Hoover's fright. The thought is not calculated to inspire national pride, but it seems inescapable. Compare Hoover's behavior with that of Congress. The Senate rejected the bonus bill while 8,000 angry veterans swarmed on the Capitol steps and plaza, shouting demands and threats. Not a soul on the hill except silly old Charley Curtis exhibited a qualm of personal fear when several hundred sullen men were picketing the Capitol for ninety consecutive hours. It did not occur to the reporters to be alarmed for their personal safety —not even to the girl reporters. Yet at the very moment when Senators and Representatives were coming and going through the picket lines, attending to their jobs, the President decided to abandon his traditional trip to the Capitol to sign bills. And when thirty or forty meek and footsore men started to plod past the White House, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, lord of a million guns, lapsed into a panic and threatened to call out the troops if the police permitted this ragged handful to approach within two blocks of the executive mansion! It is interesting to speculate on how Old Hickory Jackson, or Grover Cleveland, or Teddy Roosevelt, or the stiff-necked, lantern-jawed Presbyterian who occupied the White House during the World War would have acted under such circumstances. No sensible person wishes the President to expose himself to actual danger, but the suggestion that any danger to him was involved in this pathetic demonstration is ridiculous. In the same spirit of hysteria the authorities now have ordered the veterans to evacuate all public property within a term of days, on pain of arrest. This is courting trouble with a vengeance. The men say they will refuse, and the thought of 10,000 ex-soldiers resisting arrest is not pleasant. Guts and sanity are needed to avert trouble, but where we look for the white plume we espy only the White Feather.

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MR. HOOVER'S peevish telegram declining Governor Roosevelt's request for a conference on the St. Lawrence waterway treaty has been pronounced " a triumph of delicate insult" by one writer and "the outburst of a fat man suffering from prickly heat" by another. Regardless of how it is characterized, it promises to be one of the costliest bits of satisfaction in which Herbert Hoover ever indulged. In answer to his rhetorical declaration that negotiations with Canada "have been under way for nearly three years," he is now confronted with a letter in which his own State Department informed Governor Roosevelt last August that "no negotiations of any kind are going on," and also with later official announcements by this government and Canada that negotiations would be initiated "at once." But the consequences of the President's rashness and spite are not likely to end with a simple challenge to his veracity. To his retort can be attributed the Senate's action in authorizing the Foreign Relations Committee to investigate the history and circumstances of the negotiations. One of the principal issues involved in the matter is whether the power generated in connection with the St. Lawrence development is to be dis-

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tributed by the State of New York or by private companies. I assume that the Senate committee will ascertain how that question has been affected by the Administration's handling of the subject, the names of the interested companies, and the relations, if any, of their officials with members of the Hoover Administration. When this is done I am sure we shall be treated to some very edifying facts, and that Hapless Herbert will rue the temper which caused him to send that telegram to his campaign adversary. Of course, certain excuses can be made for him. He simply isn't the type of man who finds it easy to sit down across the table from a man who is running for the same office that he is trying to hold. If cruel chance ever forces Mr. Hoover into such a situation it will be weeks before he can unglue his eyes from his belt buckle.

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IT should be repeated that the Congress which adjourned last week was treated to more ignorant and unmerited abuse by editors, cartoonists, and so-called "business leaders" than any within memory. The list of deaths and breakdowns caused by overwork and overstrain during the session just ended is appalling. Yet when a Senator's day consisted regularly of answering his correspondence between eight and ten in the morning, attending committee hearings from ten until noon, remaining in the chamber from noon until six, and engaging in the necessary reading and study between dinner and bedtime, it was possible for a metropolitan editor to arrive at his office at ten, compose a ringing editorial on Congressional indolence and futility before lunch, and depart for the golf course at two with the complacent knowledge that he had struck another resounding blow for the Republic! One marvels that politicians generally have abandoned their time-honored custom of shooting editors—and that it has not been adopted by the harried Washington correspondents. The failure of Congress to give fuller consideration to the Costigan-La Guardia bill, intended to revive the starved purchasing power of American consumers, while unfortunate, is easy to explain. Members of both houses simply felt it would be a waste of time and effort to discuss a measure which the President was certain to veto if passed. Indeed, most of them feel that nothing effective can be done to restore normal conditions until the Hoover jinx has been lifted. However, the author of the bill has one concrete achievement to his credit for the session. The author is the brilliant Donald Richberg, counsel for the railway labor executives, and he waged a single-handed and successful fight to prevent Hoover from promoting Wilkerson—the most notorious injunction judge in the United States—to the second highest court in the land. It is true that Wilkerson could be given a recess appointment by the President, but in order to accept it he would be compelled to resign from the district bench in Chicago and face the hazard of rejection by the Senate at the next session. I suspect the valiant jurist will elect to hold on to his lifetime cinch as a comparatively humble United States District Judge. And I suspect that, in so doing, His Honor, Wilkerson, J., can be acquitted of impracticality. It is a fact that Mr. Hoover's brave adventures in the field of judicial enhancement have a way of going sour.

Soviet Russia—Land of Youth

By HARRY F. WARD

IN the Soviet Union the use of military terms to describe the peaceful activities of everyday life is something more than analogy. The building of socialism is also a war. The "shock brigades" and "storm brigades" in agriculture and industry, the "cultural army" with its "raids" into illiterate and uncultured territory, are waging strenuous warfare against ancient foes of human progress who must now be conquered if the foundations of socialism are to be successfully laid. They fight against ignorance and inefficiency, against indolence and drunkenness, against graft and bureaucracy. They give the pugnacious tendencies of man full expression in constructive activities, as the idealists have long desired. And there are plenty of hardships to be endured, actual dangers to be faced. Just as we were leaving Odessa, the morning paper carried a brief account of a young Komsomol found dead upon the road, shot by the kulaks against whom he had been waging relentless propaganda.

In these campaigns there are no such periods of inactivity as come to the soldiers in the trenches. While every nerve is still strained to secure speed in construction and quantity in production, a tremendous drive for quality is started. Before the economic base of a Socialist society—the heavy industries and mechanized agriculture—is quite established, a big campaign is launched to build up light industries for consumption goods, to increase and improve the food supply and the housing. As soon as illiteracy is "liquidated," the whole land, clear to the borders of Asia, is aroused to seek technical education. Such war, unending and without discharge, even more than our modern high-powered campaigns of destruction requires youth to win its battles. It depends upon the inexhaustible supplies of energy and enthusiasm from which each new generation draws its hope for the conquest of life.

Every chronicler of the Russian revolution has noted how it drew mere boys and girls into the soviets, demonstrating that a revolutionary development needs youth for counsel as well as for war. Now the enormous constructive activities compel the giving of large administrative responsibilities to those who were in their teens when the Czar fell and are now in their early thirties. The new enterprises are largely manned, as they were mostly built, by youth. I recall one young engineer of twenty-three who had served a term as administrator of a section of a technical institute comprised of three hundred students and thirty teachers. Before that, he had been carrying on, sometimes for twenty-four hours on end, experimental research in a factory. Hard and tiring? "Yes, but interesting," he said. Now after an enforced rest—with many others—in a sanatorium, he was going to finish his preparations for a full professorship. I remember a young woman down in the oil fields of Baku

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who also happened to be twenty-three. She had just graduated from the engineering school, and she was in charge of the installation and operation of machinery in four sections of a new refinery. She was, moreover, respected as thoroughly competent by the American foreman.

It is the youngsters of college age who are the pacesetters for the Bolshevik tempo, who work against time until the job is done, who continually invent new forms of Socialist emulation and mutual aid. In an emergency in the industries they challenge their parents to competition. They lead them into the collective farms in the villages. They are creating the new proletarian writing, painting, and music. Their shock brigades have given a new lead to the Communist Party and are filling its ranks with a type whose propaganda consists in doing rather than in talking. These young people are formulating the answer to the question of what will happen when the older generation of revolutionaries with their self-forgetting enthusiasm is gone. They are engaged in a continuous revolution. Instead of overthrowing established but enfeebled authority, they are destroying and replacing ancient ideas, attitudes, and habits. A great task and a long vision mold them too. To prevent them from becoming engrossed with the mechanics of Socialist construction or falling once again into the treadmill of routine they are called now to achieve a classless society by 1937.

Soviet educators are saying that the youth who have grown up since the revolution constitute a new type of person. They mean new not simply as contrasted with the prerevolutionary Russian or older Party members, but with the rest of the world. In so far as the former comparison is concerned they certainly have a much clearer-cut mentality, they think more concretely and concisely. When you seek information from them, these younger men and women take out a pencil and ask for your exact questions. Then rapidly they formulate their answers according to an exact outline, and usually you get precisely what you are after in the minimum of time. In one city I remember wasting half the morning trying to get to a busy party executive. It took me three minutes to get to an equally busy Komsomol official, and less than five to get the appointments made for succeeding days to secure the information I was after. They were promptly and efficiently carried out. In another place we sat one afternoon in a factory listening to an apparently interminable report by the Communist Party secretary on the year's work while the chairman tried in vain to keep an increasing number of the workers from slipping out of the meeting. That night we told the Komsomol leaders about it. They laughed. "That's out of date," they said. "We'll get after the party about it."

Remembering the hours spent with small companies of these leaders of the masses in many places, one still feels the impact of their vitality; one realizes also that it is as different from that of other European students as they, in their turn, are different from the students of the United States. The latter, with their doubting fear of life or their inability to find enjoyment unless it is paid for and provided by others, seem strangely world-weary alongside exuberant youth of more ancient lands, with their hikes and rest houses, their unaffected group singing and folk dances. This quality of exuberance the Russians share, but they work while they study and study while they work, uniting theory and practice not in minor jobs whose outcome is private profit, but in a vast social rebuilding. For this they are all paid a stipend just as our men at West Point and Annapolis are paid, but they earn it by their social productivity. They are enjoying life while they are changing it. Ask them what they are interested in next to their work and studies; every group runs the gamut of life in its answers—philosophy, art, literature, music, nature, sports—and each of these they can discuss with a critical maturity beyond the reach of any similar group of American students. Their greatest weakness is their imperfect view of the outside world to which the propagandist nature of the foreign news in their papers has condemned them. But the nature of their questions about life in the United States, whose technical capacity they seek to overtake and surpass in the next ten years, indicates a suspicion of this weakness and also their ability to think for themselves. They know about the Scottsboro boys, Al Capone, and the dumping of Brazilian coffee, and they ask you concretely why these things are done and what they mean for our future. As they ask these questions and probe for the import of your inquiries about their own activities and attitudes, there shines from their eyes a concentrated and eager intensity such as I have never seen before outside a religious revival or a strike meeting. And this is focused not upon some personal emergency but upon matters of everyday social activity.

Every American to whom I have talked, who has taught these youthful builders of socialism, agrees that the first and main difference between them and the more serious section of American college students lies in the fact that they are dominated by a great purpose. As a Soviet educator put it, "They know where they are going; they know how; and they know why." It is, of course, the Five-Year Plan—and its successors—that has opened up a clear road before them and brought certainty of direction. The building of socialism is not a vague and blurred ideal, but a definite enterprise that is being worked out in blueprints and specifications. They know not only the transitional nature of the present period, but to what it leads. They see a long, hard road before them, and no millennial Utopia at the end of it. They regard the present conquest of the material means of life through new forms of organization as the necessary preliminary to the opening up of a new freedom for the continuous development of all human capacities. Ask them, for example, how they propose to overcome a world-wide difficulty and get students who have become accustomed to a metropolitan environment to live and work in cramped villages, and they will speak first of a debt of honor to the system that has supported them and perhaps of party discipline; then they will add, "But you know we are going to abolish the differences between city and country."

Take the pick of these young builders of socialism, and they equal the best types of any other culture, from Greece to the United States. Biologically they are a select company. Mostly of peasant stock, they are the survivors of a hard and ancient struggle with nature and a poor social environment. They have survived, furthermore, the lean years of famine. Finally, their ruggedness has been filled with the greatest purpose that can enter into man. One feels that in them the life force has once again come to full flood-tide. It is with this fact that those who dream of destroying what they are building must reckon.

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Socialism and Norman Thomas

The twelve questions put by Norman Thomas to Oswald Garrison Villard and answered by him in our issue of July 20 have aroused widespread comment. We print below a few of the letters received.—EDITOR THE NATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: May I be permitted to ask Norman Thomas to make clear, through the pages of *The Nation,* his stand on the following questions:

1. How do the Socialists propose to overthrow capitalism, and establish a classless social order, without the use of force?

2. Do you believe that capitalism, controlling the election machinery, will ever permit the transfer of power into the hands of the workers by means of the ballot?

3. Do you believe that capitalism, controlling the means of production, will ever permit them to pass into the hands of the workers, unless forced to do so?

4. Do you believe in the confiscation of private property in general, and the means of production in particular, for the workers and by the workers? ("Purchase," instead of "Confiscation," we should consider as too naive to be accepted as an answer.)

5. Do you believe in the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Chicago, July 21 MAX ALPER

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The questions put to you by Norman Thomas in *The Nation* of July 20 are important and interesting. There are questions no less important to be put to Mr. Thomas.

Socialism means to some the ownership by the state of the instruments and the implements of production. To George Bernard Shaw it means also that the subway guard and the "washerlady" shall receive precisely the same income as Messrs. Morgan, Young, Baker, and Hoover—incidentally, also, that the compulsory practice of vaccination for smallpox and diphtheria shall be at once and forever discontinued on the ground that George knows better. What does it mean to Mr. Thomas?

To some socialism means the single tax, with additions and subtractions; to some the expropriation of pretty much all personal property and the gradual approach of the Soviet polity. If Mr. Thomas refers us to the Socialist platform, I don't believe that would be any more conclusive than a reference to the Democratic or Republican platforms.

New York, July 20 ALFRED P. PERKINS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: A study of the questions put to you by Norman Thomas and your replies thereto reveals major differences between yourself and the known attitude of Mr. Thomas on five of the twelve points. It is surprising that you should profess ignorance of what "those things necessary for the common life" are. What else can they be but the means of production of food, clothing, shelter, and those commodities which characterize a higher standard of living?

It is extremely difficult to visualize the effects of a planned economy under capitalist auspices. Such a situation prevails in Italy where the state either owns or rigidly controls the key industries, yet Italy faces the same crisis which confronts individualistic America.

Your reply to question eleven calls for a discussion of the reasons for the existence of political parties. Bearing in mind that socialism aims to abolish classes, we must accept present political alignments as the logical outgrowth of the clash of rival interests. A political party is built upon the aspirations of a particular class or group in society and is characterized by unity of principle and action. Thus, we see in all democratic countries, except America, parties representing opposing interests. In Great Britain, for instance, the Conservative Party is the political expression of the landed aristocracy while the Liberals are spokesmen for the free-trade commercial interests. In America, owing to political immaturity, the class interests are obscured by a precious set of political knaves. Informed people know who owns both major parties and why they so ably serve their masters. What objection can logically be raised to the formation of a political party representative of the working class? The struggle is here; why should not labor cast its hat into the ring with an effective political organization?

New York, July 20 CHARLES R. BRADFORD

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Mr. Thomas and Mr. Villard seem to be unable to make clear to what extent they agree or disagree. It would be more to the point if Mr. Thomas were to ask Mr. Villard these questions:

1. Do you believe that there is any just way to get money without work?

2. If you do, which of the several kinds of property which confer that right on their owners ought to have the protection of the government?

3. If you do not, what would you do with such property? Tax away its full income value, leaving its use to private initiative, or socialize it?

My sympathy is with Mr. Villard in his distaste for a class party. The Socialist Party should aim at the organization of those who want socialism. They are the people who are socialized, who love their neighbors. Even the working class must rise above its immediate needs to join this fraternity.

Jersey City, July 20 ARCHIBALD CRAIG

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: A word of appreciation for your answers to the twelve questions in the open letter of Norman Thomas. Although I very much admire Mr. Thomas as I hear him over the radio, I seem to have your slant on the subjects of his letter.

Canton, Pa., July 22 J. M. JONES

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I read with great interest Mr. Villard's answers to Mr. Thomas, but I confess that I was not satisfied. To the first question, whether our capitalistic nationalist social order is doomed, the answer is "Yes, if it continues at it has since 1914." That implies that if the capitalist order makes some little changes, it may continue indefinitely.

Mr. Villard believes in a careful planning directed toward the rapid socialization of natural resources, but makes special exception of land. Land even at the present time is only owned conditionally, subject to the payment of taxes. Would it make such a difference if the title of the land were vested in society and merely leased at a sum comparable to present taxes? Such a lease could be made for a lifetime, subject to the payment of the amount stipulated and utilization of the land. The only difference would be that the land could not be transferred. Therefore, no profit could be made on it and it would revert to society at the death of the lessee.

Milwaukee, July 21 J. P. SCHROETER

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In the Driftway

THE tall tale is a vital part of the American tradition, as Constance Rourke so admirably and amusingly shows in her book "American Humor." It has been with us since our earliest days, experiencing a new burst of vigor and exaggeration with every major event in our history. Paul Bunyan represents probably the highest point in exaggeration and consistency, but characters and situations similar in their conception if not so consistent in their development are to be found in all parts of the country to match all epochs of their history.

* * * * *

THERE is reason to believe that the tall tale is as vigorous as ever, and the Drifter would be delighted to have further confirmation from anyone who happens to run into a tale as tall as Texas which has sprung out of America's more recent past. The late Great Boom will undoubtedly produce stories of short sales and giant pools as towering as Paul Bunyan's forests, but its ending is still too close for comfort, much less humor, and it will be several healing years, perhaps, before we shall be able to laugh off the twenties as the tallest tale of all. The farm deflation, on the other hand, is of such long standing that it has already begun to produce its tall tales, two of which the Drifter thinks ought to be recorded. The first is already several years old. It concerns a farmer who is showing a visitor around his place. He recounts his mortgages; he tells how much he has lost on each of his crops; he points out his flourishing pigs which are only another expensive investment promising no return. In the course of the tour the farmer and his visitor come upon the hired man. "'Course I don't pay him," says the farmer. "He works for me till he owns the farm and then I work for him till I get it back."

* * * * *

THE other tale is new, so far as the Drifter knows. A farmer who had been unable to meet his mortgage came one day to see the president of the mortgage company which rather than take over the land had allowed the farmer to continue using it. The farmer told the president that he was thinking of moving to another farm down the road. Upon inquiry, he admitted that the mortgage company which owned the other farm had offered to make certain improvements if he would take over the place. The president persuaded him to remain where he was, but only by promising improvements equal to those offered by the rival company. A few months passed. Again the farmer appeared, to tell the president that while he appreciated the improvements that had been made, he had decided to move after all to the other farm. His reason was cogent. The rival mortgage company, it developed, had offered to send the farmer's son to college if he would move to their farm. The president, upholding the best American traditions of competition, said that *his* company would send the boy to college, would send him, in fact, to Alabama Polytechnic Institute. The farmer was touched but not swayed. "I'm sorry," he said, "but the other company's going to send him to Yale."

THE DRIFTER

Finance

Some Novelties in Regulation

PUBLIC utility holding companies have recently been brought under an enfilading fire by at least four commissions—those of Wisconsin, Alabama, and New York, and the Federal Power Commission. The Wisconsin and Alabama bodies have ordered that no unearned dividends be paid by operating companies to the absentee holding concerns until it is established that such payments would not impair the financial strength of the operating units. Interest has also been expressed in the amount of service fees paid to the parent companies, as to whether depreciation charges are being adequately maintained, and in general as to whether subsidiaries are being "milked" for the benefit of the controlling interests. The New York commission publicly expressed its disapproval of certain accounting practices of the Associated Gas and Electric System, and the Federal Power Commission came out with a statement favoring regulation of holding companies by public authority.

In some cases the new orders seem a bit beside the point, as when the Wisconsin body seeks to learn from the telephone company of that State the salary paid to Mr. Gifford, head of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. It turns out that the companies which are forbidden to pay dividends on their common stock have already ceased such payments—a fact which the commission must have known very well. The essential thing is that a vigorous approach is being made to the utility problem through the operating company, from which the holding organization draws its financial sustenance. Possibly no satisfactory general solution can be reached in this direction; a maze of minute regulations would apparently be necessary, dealing with inter-company loans and credits, service, management and engineering fees, and the like.

More important than all this, in the long run, is the fact that a new theory of rate-making is gradually emerging. The Wisconsin company had asked for an increase in rates, instead of which a 12½ per cent reduction was ordered. In support of its decision the commission laid down the principle that in difficult times such as these a 6 per cent return on the company's stock is adequate, and that rates should take into consideration the actual value of the service rendered to the public. A long series of court decisions holds, on the contrary, that 7 and 8 per cent on the invested capital is not excessive, taking into consideration the need of attracting new funds through proved stability of earning power.

But no court has been able to show how it is possible to guarantee a 7 or 8 per cent return on capital in the face of a falling volume of business. The American Telephone and Telegraph Company itself is confronted with that problem. Its operating subsidiaries have not been earning the dividends they have been paying to the parent organization, owing largely to the fact that in the first six months of this year 785,000 telephone instruments have been disconnected in excess of new connections. Further, the electric utilities, which in recent years insisted that invested capital meant cost of reproduction, are now confronted with the fact that the use of such a cost basis, owing to the fall in commodity prices, might actually result in a reduction of rates.

A bill was introduced in the last Congress providing that the public interest and the provision of adequate transportation, rather than a hypothetical return on capital, should form the main basis of railway rate-making. Nothing came of the bill, but it will be heard from again. It bears remarkable similarity to some of the ideas which the Wisconsin utility commission has been airing recently.

S. PALMER HARMAN

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Books and Films

Misted Memories

Obscure Destinies. By Willa Cather. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

"OBSCURE Destinies" is comprised of three long short stories of the pre-war West. Neighbor Rosicky is a simple, low-toned account of the life and death of a Bohemian farmer living on the Nebraska prairie. Old Mrs. Harris, a character-study of three women, depicts as many generations in the life of a family transplanted from the old South to the new West. Two Friends draws a pastel portrait—which the Sherwood Anderson of "Horses and Men" might have signed—of a pair of late nineteenth-century small-town business men. Of these the first, conceived somewhat in the mood of "My Antonia" and "O Pioneers!", is the most successful. Its idealized peasant types, as her readers know, dwell close to the heart of Willa Cather. Her warm sympathy and simplicity of outlook are exactly suited to such an idyll of quiet sentiment as Neighbor Rosicky. The remaining two stories are less effective. Old Mrs. Harris should have been a short novel of the length, perhaps, of "A Lost Lady." At any rate, it seems to require a more complicated, a fuller treatment than has been accorded it. The shortest of the trio of tales, Two Friends, suffers from the opposite defect. It is little more than an anecdote of character into which Miss Cather has infused her beautifully misted memories of the old populist West, as she imagines it to have been before Sinclair Lewis made his way down Main Street. It is too slight for forty pages. On the whole, "Obscure Destinies" will please Miss Cather's admirers; and even those who are bewildered at the jacket blurb which ranks her with "the greatest of living authors" will note with satisfaction that for the moment the artificial, ivory-tower mood of "Shadows on the Rock" has been abandoned. These stories are drawn naturally and without manipulation from that same store of memories which produced those excellent books, "My Antonia" and "O Pioneer!"

With these memories it would be discourteous to quarrel. Every adult is entitled to hold his childhood inviolate. But one should, I think, bearing in mind the natural kindliness of Miss Cather's temperament, swallow her West with at least a few ounces of citric acid. She prefers to remember kindly, patient, intelligent peasants like Rosicky; manly, generous, wholesome farm children like the young Rosickys; gentle, educated, beauty-loving couples like the none-too-credible Mr. and Mrs. Rosen (Miss Cather really should not bother with Jews; her Bohemian touch is surer); and picturesque, democratic, heart-of-gold business men like the two friends, Dillon and Trueman. All her characters dislike pushing, boosting, "progressive methods." The author conceives them as belonging to an era "when business was still a personal adventure." They are her pioneer West. But when one remembers what kind of "progressive methods" were actually used in the winning of the West, one wonders whether these people of Miss Cather's were not entirely eccentric to the period rather than representative of it, as she appears in all honesty to believe. Her West was not built up by the exercise of the nicer Christian virtues, but by blood and iron. The government troops, the railroaders, the packers, and the monopolists of the latter half of the nineteenth century were only by courtesy of Miss Cather's idealism engaged in "a personal adventure." The old West had its humble peasants, its kindly small-town bankers; but for the most part it was the joint creation of masters and slaves.

In the opening years of this century there flourished a now almost forgotten New England writer, Sarah Orne Jewett. While she was far from lavender-and-old-lace, she was hardly what one would call a realist, even for her time. Preferring always to stress their finer and more endearing qualities, she wrote poignant little tales about simple New England people. She was in her way a skilful and honest writer. When Willa Cather was a young girl, she knew and loved and was encouraged by Sarah Orne Jewett; and of recent years she has done much to rescue her from ill-deserved neglect. The two women as artists are much alike, though Miss Cather is far stronger, more full-blooded and more sophisticated. In both is a foundation of Christian idealism. Both possess a sweetness and a sympathy which are not quite fit for large themes or any very resolute confrontation of life. Both prefer humble and patient people as against "important" or masterful people. While never sticky, they are both what the book trade would call "wholesome." In years to come, I believe Miss Cather will be recognized as a greater Sarah Orne Jewett of the West. She strikes lovely notes, but they are minor. To her better books (and they are her earlier ones) one may turn for a very moving kind of country sentiment, but hardly for a large, true, realistic picture of the time.

CLIFTON FADIMAN

Keeper of Men

Twenty Thousand Years in Sing Sing. By Warden Lewis E. Lawes. Ray Long and Richard R. Smith. $3.

THE title of Warden Lawes's book is derived from the fact that the sum of the sentences of the 2,500 men who constitute Sing Sing's prison population runs to 20,000 years. But the book is not only a record of Warden Lawes's highly intelligent and successful administration of Sing Sing Prison. It is also a personal record of his whole career as a prison administrator as well as an eloquent exposition of his own penal philosophy. Altogether, the book is an excellently written and moving account of an experience in practical penology. It is bound to establish itself as one of the classic documents of penological literature.

Warden Lawes may be justly proud of his accomplishment. He rose from prison guard to administrator of one of the largest prisons in the country. As he says, Mike the Rat Catcher was more important in his penological education than any theory. When he came to Sing Sing the worst horrors of the early decades of the prison's history were over—the rule of silence, the "cat" and the "shower," diets that included the luxury of two eggs a year for each prisoner—but the prison was far from the well-governed institution it is today, after twelve years of Lawes's wardenship. The prisoner has decent food, the opportunity to work, dramatic entertainments, exercise, athletics—the Sing Sing baseball team, it seems, is particularly expert at stealing bases. The Sing Sing prison hospital is the only one of its kind in the world that has been approved by the American College of Physicians and Surgeons. The prisoners are permitted through the Mutual Welfare League a certain amount of self-government. The American reader has been accustomed by his newspaper to think of prisons in terms of sullen and defiant men, riots, escapes, and executions. It will do him a vast amount of good to be introduced also to the normal course of prison life in at least one well-managed prison. Prisoners are usually well-behaved, and apparently lifers are the very models of deportment. Prison life is a tragi-comedy. Consider, for instance, the prisoners about to be released who are tanning themselves in the sun in order to make themselves look like returning vacationists. Many such droll stories are told by Warden Lawes.

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Yet it must not be supposed that prison life in Sing Sing is an idyll. Even if it were there need be no fear that there would be a rush for admission. The cell blocks shut inexorably upon Sing Sing's inmates at night. The problems of prison administration are many and difficult, and often dangerous, but they have been handled by Warden Lawes with very uncommon sense. The secret of his success has lain in his realization of the fact that prison government should be a form of benevolent despotism. He has avoided, on the one hand, sentimentality, and on the other unnecessary harshness. He has fortunately possessed the qualities of the political mind at its best: its flexibility and its tact in dealing with men. A certain amount of experience not only in penology but politics is, indeed, necessary to make the ideal prison governor. At the basis of his penal philosophy is the conviction that at least half of his wards were the victims of circumstances and that therefore they will respond to the ordinary incentives of human behavior.

One of the most fascinating parts of Warden Lawes's book is his account of the operation of capital punishment. He is firmly opposed to it not because he believes in the sanctity of human life but because he regards the death penalty as futile. He has led 150 men and women to execution but he has seen murder continue unabated. He matches the familiar story of the pickpocket who stole in the very shadow of the gallows with a case of a prisoner who stabbed and killed another in the very shadow of the death house at Sing Sing. He points out the fact that he has never received a request to witness an execution from a district attorney who prosecuted the condemned, or the judge who sentenced him. Numerous requests however do come from policemen. To bring home to everybody the scenes at the death house he urges a very interesting revival of the idea of public executions: the broadcasting of an electrocution over the radio. An excellent idea which will be even better when television is finally perfected.

WILLIAM SEAGLE

Three Civilizations in Manchuria

Manchuria: Cradle of Conflict. By Owen Lattimore. The Macmillan Company. $3.

Manchuria: The Cockpit of Asia. By Colonel P. T. Etherton and H. Hessell Tiltman. Frederick A. Stokes Company. $3.

Japan Speaks on the Sino-Japanese Crisis. By K. K. Kawakami. The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

China Speaks on the Conflict Between China and Japan. By Chih Meng. The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

Japan and America. By Henry W. Taft. The Macmillan Company. $3.

Twenty Years of the Chinese Republic. By Harold Archer Van Dorn. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.

The Young Revolutionist. By Pearl S. Buck. Friendship Press and The John Day Company. $1.50.

HERE are two books about Manchuria, that vast territory of colorful racial history, heterogeneous cultural elements, and rich mineral resources, recent storm center of the world. On this spot three civilizations have met together, and one of them must win out against the other two. There is China of antique continuity; there is imperialist Japan with the most modern army in the world; and there is Red Russia, of unknown force, looking on. It is interesting that China owes her immediate title in Manchuria not to conquest but to having been conquered at the time of the Manchus. Mr. Lattimore states that the Manchus seem never to have penetrated into the eastern part of Manchuria. This eastern country, including Kirin and Liaoning Fengtien or Mukden Province, "was old Korea," and at one time the Koreans were well established there. "The popular name for ruins of cities and fortifications is still 'Korean cities'." However the recent influx of one million Koreans to Manchuria is due to only one thing: unendurable conditions under the Japanese guardianship at home. Ironically enough, part of Japan's present claim to Manchuria is based upon Korean immigration to the east, though it has been the rule for the Korean immigrant to become a naturalized Chinese as soon as possible for the sake of protection. The rate of Chinese colonization, on the other hand, has been speeded up a good deal by Russian and Japanese business enterprise in Manchuria.

According to Mr. Lattimore—and I think he is right—Japanese leadership in Manchuria is not permanently possible. There must be spiritual adhesion as well as that of force to hold the vast territory of Manchuria. Manchuria is a vital factor to China, to Japan, and to Russia. It is Mr. Lattimore's opinion that Russia will win, rather than China with her ancient civilization or Japan with her new hybrid militarism. "As for Russia, now a very different nation from that which fought Japan or engaged as an apathetic pseudo-western nation in the war of 1914-1918, it is rapidly developing a specifically Russian non-western technique of warfare which is the cause of intense interest and no little alarm to western nations. The Russian army is an engine of unknown power and very great importance."

Mr. Lattimore's "Manchuria: Cradle of Conflict" is the work of a scholar, a thinker, and a man of vision. He has been at work upon his material for a period of years, studying Chinese sources and traveling for personal observation. The result is the best possible book about the actualities of present-day Manchuria, along with some interesting and rational prophecies.

"Manchuria: The Cockpit of Asia," written by two Englishmen, is an opportunist production much different in scope and treatment. Two good journalists, seeing the need of such a book, have pieced together news clippings and digested the books written on the subject. The result is valuable only as a newspaper résumé of what has happened since last summer.

In the companion books, "Japan Speaks" and "China Speaks," Mr. Kawakami and Mr. Meng respectively seem to say "My country, right or wrong." It is unfortunate, since Mr. Kawakami is supposed to be a liberal-minded Japanese. He is not informed, either, on the Korean situation. However, Mr. Meng is as poorly informed on certain historical points and his book is less well organized. It is false to say that "Taoism has been the national religion of Korea." He makes the untrue statement that Korea always "has been under the suzerainty of China," a statement which is contradicted in his own book. On page 199, The Case for Korea, written by a well-known Korean statesman, Dr. Syngman Rhee, begins thus: "For more than 4,000 years Korea was an independent and sovereign nation."

In "Twenty Years of the Chinese Republic" Mr. Van Dorn tries to give a broad survey of China since 1912. It has chapters on educational, religious, political, social, and economic progress. Although it contains nothing new or original, it will be helpful to the layman.

"Japan and America" is well documented and factually verified. The author, Henry Taft, brother of ex-President Taft, tells of his conversion to things Japanese through the good-will committees and the Welcome Association of Japan, which invited outstanding and prominent Americans to visit Japan in 1930. In the first part of the book he tells of his journey to Japan, of his entertainment by the royal family, and of informal conferences and good-will speeches in Japan. Then he gives a political survey of the country, with a discussion of the disarmament conference, anti-Japanese agitation, the Im-

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migration Bill of 1924. He concludes with the Manchurian controversy in which he is disposed to favor the claims of Japan.

"The Young Revolutionist" is a short novel set in China by the author of "The Good Earth." Ko-sen is a Chinese boy of seventeen, the son of a typical Chinese landowner. He reflects the tortured, restless, and unadjusted China which is looking for a new light. The solution is very plain and obvious. Ko-sen sees the light of the west: "The Master there—I think they told me the Master there is one named Jesus. It is under him we would take service for our country." In many ways it is hard to believe that the author of this book is the author also of "The Good Earth" and "East Wind, West Wind." But in one respect she is more fortunate in her choice of a hero here than in "The Good Earth" for Ko-sen, unlike the peasant, Wang Lung, has been in touch with western ideas and hence is more consistent when his psychology becomes western.

In Pearl Buck we have the best of the missionaries, truly cultured, profoundly sincere, with a great gift for writing. To see a Confucian civilization in decay is to gain the conviction that it needs something, but the reader is made to feel at the end both of "The Good Earth" and "The Young Revolutionist" that China needs but one thing, those Christian doctrines which the west has held for 2,000 years, whereas I have never met personally one original and vigorous-minded Chinese who felt that Christianity at this late date had anything vital to offer China, or could reinspire in the exhausted east another 2,000 years of energetic and creative life.

YOUNGHILL KANG

Socialism or Drift

As I See It. By Norman Thomas. The Macmillan Company. $2.

NOTHING could more neatly reveal the dilemma of American Socialist leadership than this latest book by Norman Thomas. How can a Socialist leader, in these times, withdraw to his study and produce a calm, unhurried volume, based on exhaustive scholarship, charting with laborious detail the possible course of American economic and political life toward a Socialist society? Such a book is desperately needed; were it capably done, it might constitute a landmark in our progress. But today, landmarks of a sort whiz past like telephone poles beside a railway track; and still so limited numerically is the Socialist movement that its ablest thinkers must throw themselves unreservedly into propaganda, organization, and the concrete social emergencies which, if dodged, would precipitate justifiably fatal criticism. And if this book betrays by internal evidence the whirlpool of activity in which its author lives, that fact is not without its compensations. The book has life and movement; it will be read by many who would not approach with a ten-foot pole such works as those by the Webbs or G. D. H. Cole; finally, it will have its own educational virtue by reason of the fact that social attitudes are changed less by the influence of solid exposition than by specific, day-by-day events interpreted and criticized from the radical point of view.

Mr. Thomas opens his book with certain "reconsiderations" of the social scene since the appearance of his previous volume, "America's Way Out." He sharpens the issue between his view and that of capitalist critics, and, by outlining some of the consequences of the depression as it has deepened and has rocked the capitalist structure, narrows at least a little the gap between his socialism and that of some of his critics from the left. On the class struggle he writes:

> I believe not only in the obvious fact of struggle between groups with conflicting economic interests, but in *the* class struggle between an owning and a working class. . . . The idea of such a struggle is or may be a unifying force in asserting the international solidarity of labor. But I protest when certain self-proclaimed Marxists act as if to believe in the class struggle was a kind of mystic act of salvation by faith, which almost absolves them from hard and intelligent work to organize labor economically and politically, or from the effort to purge labor unions from exceedingly "capitalistic" abuses, and which permits them to fight communism far more enthusiastically than capitalism.

Such words indicate how unwarranted have been the sneering lampoons directed against Mr. Thomas by American Communists; they also indicate how undiscriminating are the praises of dilettante supporters who wish merely to vote for "an honest man." Unlike Communists, however, Mr. Thomas believes that democratic and non-violent methods are "consistent with the class struggle," though he also points out that "socialism is not committed to absolute democracy or absolute pacifism regardless of time, place, and circumstance. . . ." He emphasizes effectively the menace of drift and confusion in the world crisis. Unless a definite program, growing out of a definite social philosophy, is embarked upon, violence will be the inevitable outcome.

One of the most thoughtful chapters is the one on The Acceptance of Violence, in which Mr. Thomas, without indulging in sentimentalism or dogma, makes a strong case for non-violence as a means of social change and decries that "tragedy of history," the way in which "lovers of liberty and justice have always blunted the edge of their own idealism, sown the seeds of new oppressions, debased the shining cities of their dreams by the wholesale violence they have felt obliged to use." In another important chapter on The Essential Condition of Economic Planning, Mr. Thomas probes mercilessly some of the outstanding pleas for a planned economy and exposes the lack of realism in plans which do not allow adequately for the futilities of competition and profit-seeking. In a seven-page Postscript on Politics which bears an uncomfortably close resemblance to an impromptu addendum to a speech, he dismisses in less than thirty words the growing demand for a new mass party of labor and liberal make-up, and editorializes on the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Manchuria, Shanghai, the major parties, the disarmament conference, the collapse of the banks, the war debts, and the urgent task of Socialist Party organization. It may be suspected that Norman Thomas does not completely appreciate the impression of haste, and occasionally of superficiality, his book is destined to convey. Yet when every critical word is said, it holds wisdom for our times, presented forcefully and without equivocation. It will have an influence, apart from the rising prestige of its author, because it deals boldly with issues that Americans can in no wise hope to escape.

DEVERE ALLEN

Shorter Notices

Sheba Visits Solomon. By Helene Eliat. Translated from the German by David Zablodowsky. The Viking Press. $2.50.

Helene Eliat has written an altogether delightful *tour de force* in this story of the historic visit paid by Balkis, Queen of Sheba, to Solomon, King of the Jews. Charming, gay, witty, ironic, "Sheba Visits Solomon" is just about everything one would wish such a novel to be, informed as it is at once with a genuine intuition and the sheerest fantasy. Sheba, according to the author, did not visit the fat, elderly, much-married Solomon merely to drink of the fountain of his wisdom. The

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virgin queen was in quest of an heir. But although the king was too courteous to play the cad, he had eyes only for the queen's pretty little lady-in-waiting, the delectable Zud. Zud, however, had ideas of her own, and even Balkis soon saw that she had more to learn from Solomon's Egyptian wife, Tutu, than from the king himself. The occasional glimpses of the dour and aged prophet Nathan, of Solomon sitting in judgment and enjoying his own dialectics far more than the administration of the law, of the lady-in-waiting and her bucolic lover, of the queen Tutu "moral from prudence but immoral in her sympathies," are only a few of the sidelights that make the book a continuous pleasure.

Nonsuch: Land of Water. By William Beebe. Brewer, Warren and Putnam. $3.50.

Like some men who manage to make religion a joy, Mr. Beebe manages to make science a pleasure and an occasion for literary art of a high order. In this volume, the first of four to deal with his investigations of life in the waters about Nonsuch Island, Bermuda, he continues the genre of scientific writing he has developed. He deals with birds and fishes and snails and crabs, and shows, to paraphrase Heraclitus, that here, too, there are gods and beauty. The book is to be recommended for purposes of information, for aesthetic relaxation—and for emulation by other naturalists.

Spain in Revolt. 1814-1931. By Joseph McCabe. D. Appleton and Company. $2.

To the common notion of the Spanish people as a race supinely content to endure despotism and inquisition as long as it was left at liberty to watch bullfights, Mr. McCabe opposes a recital of long, unabated, and noble revolutionary effort culminating in the present democratic success. The defense perhaps was necessary, but Mr. McCabe is too fervent a defender. His style is cluttered and at times almost maudlin; and history becomes an arraignment rather than a judgment in his hands.

Kamongo. By Homer W. Smith. The Viking Press. $2.

This fine book has been handicapped by too enthusiastic reviews, publishers' blurbs, and Book-of-the-Month pronouncements that promise explanations of the universe, of the purpose of life, and of similar problems. It is in fact a well-written, unusual novel based on the author's experiences in search of lung-fish in Africa, with a charming account of the simple and not unfamiliar questions and doubts that come to an intelligent person viewing one of evolution's less successful experiments.

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Films

Nonsense and Satire

NONSENSE, like madness, has its queer logic, and the queerer the logic the more fascinating the nonsense. It needed a Lewis Carroll to think of such a perfectly convincing reply as the Mad Hatter's, 'It was the *best* butter," when his attempt to mend a watch by putting butter into it was questioned by Alice. But there have been few Lewis Carrolls in the world, and it would hardly be fair to measure all attempts at light-hearted and frankly nonsensical entertainment by applying to them the standard set up by the author of "Alice in Wonderland." Who will measure up to it? Not even the Marx Brothers or Joe Cook, delightful as their brand of nonsense often is.

Joseph L. Mankiewicz, the author of the story providing the basis for "Million Dollar Legs" (Paramount Theater), and his adapters have clearly fallen far short of producing a masterpiece. But they did let their fancy run as far as it would carry them, and the result is a film that at times has a quality of freshness and genuine imagination much too rare in Hollywood products. The best moments in the film are the episodes describing the crazy system of government which rules in the Republic of Klopstokia. What with the arm-pulling contests, which is the Klopstokian way of electing a president, and the constant popping up of mysterious spies, who include the inimitable Ben Turpin, cross-eyed, be-cloaked, and with a notebook in his hand, the story starts off in the true mood of reckless extravaganza. Unfortunately, this mood does not last.

While being thankful for small mercies, one cannot help regretting that the film fails to rise to its opportunities in two other respects, aside from its tame ending. Here was a story that seemed to cry for a fantastic treatment on the lines of René Clair's "Le Million." Yet all we get in the film is a routine linking of scenes with not the slightest attempt to give them a crazy and sweeping rhythm that would reflect the mood of its story.

The other missed opportunity one can hardly hope to see realized in Hollywood. There is implicit satire in the Klopstokian methods of government. But to bring it out and stress its points would have required courage and independence of mind, and when has Hollywood shown that it had any of these qualities or cared for them?

It would be equally idle to expect genuine satire in the pictures which are supposed to satirize Hollywood itself. Recently, we had "Make Me a Star," a picture of life in Hollywood that made fun of imaginary evils while glossing over the real ones. The same formula is to be discovered in the latest picture of this cycle, bearing the eloquent name of "What Price Hollywood?" (Mayfair Theater). If we are to believe the authors and producers of this film, the price of Hollywood is the social downfall and degradation of those unable to resist the temptation of drink, and the perpetual agony and thwarted home life of those who, thanks to their eminence, are constantly exposed to public gaze. Well, well, we had better not ask what it is that drives the Hollywood geniuses to seek oblivion in drink, or who spends countless sums of money whipping up the morbid curiosity of the public in the private life of film luminaries. Let us be content to accept this gentle picture of amiable, warm-hearted, and unaffected people suffering through no fault of their own, thankful at least for the capable acting of Lowell Sherman and Gregory Ratoff, and the less frequent glimpses of her ability which Constance Bennett has been allowed to reveal in this film.

ALEXANDER BAKSHY

Contributors to This Issue

HARRY F. WARD, secretary of the Methodist Federation for Social Service has recently been making a study of conditions in Soviet Russia.

PAUL Y. ANDERSON is the national correspondent of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*.

CLIFTON FADIMAN is head of the editorial department of Simon and Schuster.

WILLIAM SEAGLE is the author of "Cato, or the Future of Censorship."

YOUNGHILL KANG, a Korean student of the literature and philosophy of the Orient, and a member of the department of English of New York University, has written the story of his life in "The Grass Roof."

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